

Sermon #2475 — *Miscellaneous Notes*

Title: **“OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION”**

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:17

Subject: *The Afflictions of God’s Saints*

Date: Tuesday Evening — May 14, 2019

Readings: *David Burge and Mark Henson*

Introduction:

I want to return tonight to 2nd Corinthians 4:17 and try, as God the Holy Ghost will enable me, to address the subject — **“OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION”** — one more time.

(2 Corinthians 4:17) For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory.

“OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION” — That’s my subject again tonight. I am preaching to you from this text again tonight because it is presently relative to us all. We have some very dear friends who are enduring real trouble, heartache, pain, and heaviness. Some you are aware of and others you are not.

- Colemans
- Gladfelters

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- Crabtrees
- Mahans

I am talking about men and women who are loved of God and lovers of God. They are chosen, redeemed, and regenerated by his grace. They are believers, washed in the blood of Christ and born of the Spirit. — But their lives are full of pain. They hurt. And they are, some if not all, at times terribly confused.

- Bereaved Friends with Loneliness so Thick You Could Cut It with a Knife
- Parents and Grandparents Whose Rebel Children are a rushing Load of Care
- Husbands/Wives who have been Abandoned
- Abandoned Families
- Pastors Maligned and Abused by the Very People They Serve
- Dying can be very painful, even for a child of God.

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- Watching one you love die is always painful, even when the one dying is dying in the Savior’s arms.

“Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day.
Earth’s joys grow dim. Its glories slip away.
Change and decay in all around me I see. —
O Thou who changest not, abide with me!”

In the midst of heartache and trouble, that is what I need. — “O Thou who changest not, abide with me!”

- I do not need perfect health. I need God’s perfect peace.
- I do not need prosperity and wealth. I need the riches of his grace.
- I do not need a life of ease. I need the comfort of Christ’s presence.

Still, when you’re hurting, when your heart is broken, when you don’t know what to do or where to turn, and you read those words, “*our light affliction,*” you might be tempted to slam you Bible shut and

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throw it on the floor. — Before you do that, try to remember these five things.

WHAT WE DESERVE

1st — **Our afflictions are light when compared with what we deserve.**

(Psalms 103:8-14) “The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. 9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* forever. 10 **He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.** 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us. 13 **Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.** 14 **For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.**”

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- We could be cast off in reprobation. — God could have left us alone!
- We could be in heathen darkness. — Free will isn't much to cling to when your world is falling apart!
- We could be in hell!

(1 Thessalonians 5:9-11) God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, (10) Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. (11) Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

WHAT OTHERS SUFFER

2nd — **Our afflictions are light when compared to that which others have suffered before us.**

“I once complained that I had no shoes,
‘Till I met a man who had no feet.”

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- Men and women all over the world suffer the same things we do. (“*Affliction*” singular. – Not “*Afflictions*” plural.) — Why should I be any different?
- Most people in this world suffer much, much more than I do. — Why should I complain?
- God’s people in this world have always been a suffering people (Hebrews 11). — Shall I expect to live in ease?
- Job
- David
- The Apostles
- The Martyrs
- John Bunyan
- Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers that England ever heard, spent about 30 of his 58 years very sick. He was out of his pulpit sometimes for months at a time.

“Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?”

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The most gracious, most thoughtful, most caring and tender people I’ve known in this world have been people who seemed never to live a day without great pain and heaviness.

Illustration: *Professor Robert Cox*

WHAT CHRIST SUFFERED

3rd — **Our afflictions are light when compared to that which our Lord Jesus Christ suffered for us.**

(Hebrews 12:3-4) “For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. (4) Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

- Gethsemane
- Gabbatha
- Golgotha

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(Isaiah 53:6-11) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and **the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.** ⁽⁷⁾ **He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.** ⁽⁸⁾ He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. ⁽⁹⁾ And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Yet **it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.** ⁽¹¹⁾ **He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:** by his knowledge shall my righteous

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servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

(Psalm 22:1-3) My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? (2) O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. (3) But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

(Psalm 22:6) But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

(Psalm 22:14-16) I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. (15) My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. (16) For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

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(Psalm 40:12) For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

(Psalm 69:1-9) Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. (2) I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. (3) I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. (4) They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away. (5) O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. (6) Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. (7) Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered

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my face. (8) I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. (9) For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

(Psalm 69:14) Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

(Psalm 69:19) Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.

(2 Corinthians 5:21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

(Galatians 3:13) Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.

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When I know the agony of body and soul, the torments of heart, the bloody sweat which my Savior endured for me, how can I complain about my “light affliction?”

“See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!”

I ought to be able, by the grace of God, to endure my “light affliction” with patience for the honor of my blessed Redeemer who suffered so much for me.

THE GRACE RECEIVED

4th — **Our afflictions are light when compared to the countless blessings of grace our God has**

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bestowed upon us (1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 John 3:1-3).

“Count your many blessings,
Name them one by one,
And it will surprise you
What the Lord has done!

- Eternal, Covenant Blessings — Election! — Adoption! — Predestination!
- Daily, Providential Blessings.
- Glorious, Saving, Gospel Blessings — Redemption! — Faith! — Forgiveness! — Preservation! — Trials — *“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”* (Philippians 1:29).

THE GLORY AWAITING

5th — **Our afflictions are light when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** — This is exactly what Paul had in mind, when he called our affliction in this world, *“our light*

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affliction.” **Oh, how light my afflictions are, when compared to that which I shall enjoy when the Lord calls me home!**

In fact, the Holy Spirit here tells us that our afflictions are themselves instruments by which our great God is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

(2 Corinthians 4:17-18) “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”

(1 Peter 1:3-9) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not

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away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (6) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: (7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (8) Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: (9) Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.”

WHAT A CONTRAST

“*Our light affliction*” — Our affliction we shall soon exchange for glory. Our light affliction works for us a weight of glory. Our momentary affliction will give way to eternal glory! — “*For our light affliction,*

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which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

“*Which is but for a moment*” — John Trapp, quoting one of the martyrs, said, “Mourning lasteth but till morning.”

“*Worketh for us*” — God performs all things for us, even our afflictions. These “*light afflictions*” work for us, never against us. They are wrought of God. And by them our God is working us for glory.

“*A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*” — Yes, heavenly glory will be far more glorious because of “*our light affliction*” here than it could otherwise be. That makes the trial of our faith “*more precious than gold that perisheth.*” Words are too weak to express the “*exceeding and eternal weight of glory*” that shall soon be ours because of “*our light affliction!*”

“Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come.

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‘Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far;
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.
His Word my hope secures.
He will my Strength and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

And when this heart and flesh shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace!”

(Romans 8:16-18) “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: *17* And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. *18* For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

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- I am looking for a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.
- When I enter into that City bright and fair, I shall enter into and possess all the bliss of heaven’s eternal glory!
- I shall then have a new body!
- I shall then have a new life!
- Then, O blessed hope, O blessed day, all sin, all sorrow, all pain, all affliction shall cease forever!

(Isaiah 25:8-9) “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*. (9) And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

(Revelation 7:14-17) “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of

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the Lamb. (15) Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. (16) They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. (17) For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

(Revelation 21:1-4) “I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more

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death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

How beautiful heaven must be!

“We read of a place that’s called heaven.

It’s made for the pure and the free.

These truths in God’s Word He hath given. —

How beautiful heaven must be!

In heaven no drooping nor pining,

No wishing for elsewhere to be.

God’s light is forever there shining —

How beautiful heaven must be!

Pure waters of life there are flowing;

And all who will drink may be free.

Rare jewels of splendor are glowing —

How beautiful heaven must be!

The angels so sweetly are singing

Up there by the beautiful sea.

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Sweet chords from their gold harps are ringing. —
How beautiful must be!

How beautiful heaven must be!
Sweet home of the happy and free,
Fair haven of rest for the weary,
How beautiful heaven must be!”

APPLICATION

Let me wrap this message up with two texts which I hope you will hear and use for your souls’ good in the midst of trouble, heartache, and sorrow.

(Hebrews 4:16) “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Make your headquarters in the dust before the throne of grace. Bury yourself in the Word of God. Bury yourself in the worship of your Savior. Bury yourself in Christ!

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(1 Peter 5:6-7) “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: (7) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

- Cast all your care upon him who rules the world for you.
- Cast all your care upon him who died in your stead.
- Cast all your care upon him who intercedes for you at the throne of God.
- Cast all your care upon him who is touched with the feeling of your infirmities.
- Cast all your care upon him who “*careth for you!*”

Tempted and tried we’re oft made to wonder
Why it should be thus all the day long.
Yet, blessed Father, loving and gracious,
We know You’re wise and never do wrong.

Farther along we’ll know more about it.
Farther along we’ll understand why;

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Cheer up, God’s children. — Glory awaits us!
We’ll understand it all by and by.

When death has come and taken our loved ones,
Leaving our homes so lonely and drear;
Then do we cry, “O help me dear Savior,
You know my sorrow, You know my fear.”

Often I wonder why I must journey
Over a road so rugged and steep.
Why all the darkness? Why all the heartache?
Why must Your chosen so often weep?

“Faithful ‘til death,” said our loving Master,
A few more days to labor and wait;
Toils of the road will then be as nothing,
As we sweep through the beautiful gates.

When we see Jesus coming in glory;
To take us to His home in the sky;
In heaven’s glory, bowing before Him,
We’ll understand it all by and by.

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Farther along we’ll know more about it.

Farther along we’ll understand why;

Cheer up, God’s children. — Glory awaits us!

We’ll understand it all by and by.

Amen.